No. 8

The War and Our Social Problems

BY

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(Of the "Church Times")

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1914

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O you who toil and suffer,
  You gladly heard the call;
But those you sometimes envy
  Have they not given their all?
O you who rule the nation,
  Take now the toil-worn hand—
Brothers, you are in sorrow,
  In duty to your land.
Learn but this noble lesson
  Ere Peace returns again,
And the life-blood of Old England
  Will not be shed in vain.

Adelaide Anne Procter.

THE WAR AND OUR SOCIAL PROBLEMS

INTRODUCTION

IT is at a time of strain that we can best consider the deep-lying tendencies which run through social development, just as it is at a time of national anxiety that we can best discover to what an extent religion still retains its hold on the people. The pleasantness of peace allures us from year to year to forgetfulness. We are easy and confident. The day brings its work and evening its guerdon of release. Great movements ultimately affecting the social organism are in process, but they operate so slowly that we fail to appreciate them. To-day these movements are visible, for events follow upon events with appalling rapidity. Our nation has entered into a dreadful struggle with high emprise.

But so severe is the struggle and so wide-

spread is the field of the operations that we find the social organization which so slowly we have builded suddenly shaken to its foundations. Economic theory has been shattered. We have seen the introduction of a moratorium, with its grave effects, moral and financial. We have seen paper-money suddenly become established among us, to the utter amazement of the simple bimetallist. We have seen the State in possession of the railways, financing commercial operations, insuring the mercantile marine, and fixing the price of food-stuffs. It is so long since there was a European war that the results have confounded us, since our social, economic, and financial systems have grown up in the presumption of permanent peace.

We have heard a good deal during the past few years of "economic organization." Books have been written describing it, and admirable treatises have been published giving the history of its development. But we may well question whether or not there is in the United Kingdom any industrial organization worthy of the name. The shock of war would hardly have crippled us as it did if we had built up an organization as carefully as it deserved to be built up. True, we soon found our feet, but that was because, behind the industrial organization, there was a practically unlimited fund of resources. We know more of the wealth of the country than we

did, but even so it is probable that there is much more for us to learn.

Can we piece together the evidences for the social reconstruction which is already in process? That is the important question which arises. To what extent has our experience of the time of grave stress given us an indication of a direction in which the social organism might well be modified? Before we come to that question there is one which is even more important. To what extent has the outflowing of love and of service affected our ideas of economic and social relationship? There is no feature of the present trial more striking than the ready sacrifices of the wealthy. Some of us had almost despaired of ever seeing such a realization of responsibility. At the call of national peril hundreds of employers have gone on paying wages and guaranteeing employment to men and to women who were no longer giving full remunerative service. There have been instances on the other hand, I know, but in the main the employer has risen quite spontaneously to a conception of the employer's responsibility, the very antithesis of that conception which was current not many months ago, when we tried arbitrations and conciliations to bridge the gulf between employer and employed. Just so, there has been a galvanizing of the spirit of loyalty on the other side of the gulf. The manifestation

is much too sacred to be transient. It is far too precious for us to imagine that it will pass over us like the breath of a sudden tempest.

So we set out to examine in what way we can conserve the outflowing of loving service, so that we may place clearly before our minds the broad features of social reconstruction. There are hideous evils which result from war, and no Christian can think of them without agony of soul. But there also are hideous social evils which we do not apprehend, because they are put before us less dramatically than at a time of war. And yet they do not differ in essence. Poverty and lack of employment, illness and accident, the pressure of economic forces on men, and the more perilous pressure on women, the bitterness of conflict, the striving for material gain regardless of moral cost—these we have with us in times of peace; but war comes and reveals to us their true, their hideous nature. It reveals it to us with a revivifying of the spirit of solidarity and of national identity, and with this spirit a glad banishment of the lines of social cleavage. As an outcome, the State becomes spiritualized. It assumes holy enterprises: it cares for the victims of the struggle, it adjusts the elements which go to make financial complexities, and the shibboleths of party suddenly become faint echoes of foolish cries.

The Catholic Churchman cannot despair. He is a convinced optimist, because to him the world is not purposeless. He cannot see the purpose being fulfilled, but he knows that it is being fulfilled. He can see in this struggle the forces of Catholicism largely on one side. They must be. They can have no sympathy for the superman theory, or for the philosophy which places Corsica above Galilee. It is for him of no small significance that the Anglican Church should be allied with the Eastern Church, and with the greater part of the Western Church of which his Anglicanism is the offspring. It is of even more significance that the Puritan elements of English Christianity are enthusiastically with the Catholic forces. And when he sees, thus arrayed, faith in God taking up a twentieth century crusade against overweening faith in man, he asks himself to what extent this involves a deepening of the spirit of national life in the nation which takes a foremost place in the struggle. He may possibly subdivide the question, asking how will capital be affected, whether labour will be ennobled, whether international relationships will become more nearly an expression of the concord of the common peoples around the Cross of Him Who loved them so, and if, at length, there will be a development of Christianized economics. But even so it is one supreme question alone which pleads with him

for answer. After all the anguish and sorrow, can it be that humbly and with surrendered wills we are facing the accomplishment of social reconstruction, not as mere spectators of a slowly-evolving organism, but as active partakers in a wider and deeper national life, which will find its development, step by step, with the national life of kindred nations?

LANCASTRIAN.

CHAPTER I

THE RESTATEMENT OF CHARITY

IT seems to have needed a European cataclysm to bring home to our Christian consciences that our ideas on charity needed revision. We have had Poor Law Commissions with their voluminous reports; we have had annotated volumes of those reports; we have had authoritative writers in England, America, France—and in Germany—hammering away at the necessity for such a restatement of the idea of charity as would involve not merely the remedy of immediate poverty but the building up of the damaged structure of social life. At the outbreak of the war there was a flood, and a welcome flood, of charitable feeling and charitable act. The Prince of Wales' Fund was established, and it attracted subscriptions with such rapidity as to manifest a deep movement of national feeling. Men and women set out with commendable intentions at self-denial; efforts were made to ensure that the administration of the various relief funds should be on a more enlightened basis than we had seen in past years.

For a while the old-fashioned ideas of charity seemed to be triumphant. Those who had means were to give to those who had not. But before a couple of weeks had passed there began to appear definite signs that this was a crude and clumsy method, and that it would avail little in the righting of evils. Several journals pointed out that what was needed was a clearer realization that the duty of the State to those who suffered in its service was to temper their suffering. Soldiers were fighting for the very life of the Empire; their dependents were a charge, not on beneficent individuals, but on the corporate life of the community. This point was illustrated by the *Times* in an admirable article on September 8th. "There is now no reason why any person who has hitherto been dependent upon a seaman or a marine should be reduced to asking for charity, or need assistance from charitable associations." Similar appeals soon resulted in an increase of the separation allowances and—what is even more important—in the direct payment of these allowances by that democratic machinery, the Post Office. It was an advance not only in respect of the responsibility of the community; but it was an advance in the recognition of "right" on the part of the suffering. Mr. Bernard Shaw recently gave us a cynical criticism of our ideas of "deserving poor." This new theory does not draw a distinction between

the deserving and the undeserving poor. In point of thrift and of respectability, all of us are deserving and all are undeserving. Those of us who have suffered for the welfare of the State are deserving because they have suffered. It needed a war to bring out the idea.

The underlying idea was not definitely grasped. It was the beginning, and only the beginning, of a change in current conceptions. The administration of the funds gained immensely from the change, but even so the machinery was not above criticism. Yet there was some occasion for gratitude in the broadening of the conception as to who really suffered from the war. It showed a more sensitive realization of the corporate whole. The Intelligence Department of the Board of Trade was asked to give exact information as to unemployment, in order that we could use the greater knowledge of modern economics to minimize that unemployment and to consider in what way labour could be diverted to channels which were not so keenly affected by the war. Here again we see a new principle peeping forth. It was evidenced in the early efforts which were made by the Government to face the economic evils. Of these efforts more must be said in another chapter, but it is certainly all to the good that those whose hands were so filled with the important work of diplomacy, and of the conduct

of the war, should find it their duty to attempt to stay the economic evils. Instead of merely gathering funds to relieve the inevitable poverty, a work of the utmost importance, the leaders of the nation of all parties gladly combined to find ways in which poverty might be either prevented or minimized.

Then, again, we learned at an early stage that though voluntary work is an admirable venture of self-sacrifice, it is a doubtful economic good. For ten days we saw all manner of leisured people worthily offering their services. But it soon became evident that not only is the labourer worthy of his hire, but that in a complex civilization there is no stigma in the hire, even for the holiest work. The Intelligence Department of the Board of Trade consists of paid workers, but their contribution to the nation's well-being during the period of stress was not a whit the less worthy on that account. Similarly, the ladies who offered to do sewing or typewriting were soon reminded by other ladies who had the right to speak on the subject that they were failing to recognize that they were thrusting professional persons out of employment, and thus adding to the evils. Within three weeks of the outbreak of the war our conception of beneficent work changed entirely, and though the ready sacrifice on the part of the voluntary worker is as frankly appreciated as ever, yet it came to be

recognized that the best service of all is to strive to keep the wheels of the organism working. The economic machine is quite ready to work without all of us wanting to turn the handle. And the emphasis on personal service was all the more welcome in that personal service took its subsidiary position. The individual became content to be humbled.

Even if we have only partially grasped the enormous change which this development of ideas has involved, we have gone a long way towards reconstruction. It is of immense value to the community at large that the idea of reproach in accepting a dole should be banished, and that in its place should be substituted the idea of self-respecting sharing in the goods of the community; the reproach does not lie with the recipient, but with the State which fails to find the full extent of its responsibility to the recipient. Enlightened charity is anxious, not merely to "relieve," but to "reconstruct"; it will regard the economic machine, not as a dead material thing, but as a living organism, which always needs readjustment to its environment of circumstance. This charity will not meet the recurrence of the cycles of good and of bad trade with the despair of wringing hands. Rather it will think of the war of 1914 as the event which brought home to the public conscience the realization of its responsibility,

and showed some indications of the better way of escape.

It showed us rather more than that. It revealed the appalling deficiencies in our social organization. True, we fed the children in the schools in a way which was impossible even five years ago. But on the other hand we continued the pawnshop with its horrors. True, we sought a more scientific adjustment of employment, but we still lack some method of advancing money to workpeople temporarily in need, a task which the Post Office Savings Bank would readily accomplish if the enlightened men at its head were given an opportunity. True, we checked the uprise of food prices, but we still maintained the little shops in the artizan districts, so crushed by the weight of credit that they failed to respond to the fall in prices—in the very districts where that fall would have been most appreciated—towards the end of August. True, we provided for the wounded in battle in a way which made every Englishman proud, but for the sick and ill-fed of the industrial classes we made no provision worthy the name, and even the provision we made was largely the result of voluntary contribution.

Yet I maintain that the principle of corporate responsibility, the truer charity, has obtained much more welcome recognition during this period of national trial than we could have ex-

pected. Very subtly the word "charity" has changed its meaning. Instead of being the half-absent-minded toss of a coin to a beggar, it has demanded from us, by the sudden insistence of its need, the careful consideration of the full and measured purpose of that which we are doing. In a sense this may seem to be pleading for the frigid tabulated charity of the institution. It is no such thing. It is the charity which would have regard, not merely for the needs of those who are to be helped, but for the responsibilities, to-day and in days to come, of the nation of which each of us is a representative. It is the charity which trembles lest by carelessness or lack of thought or foresight it offers a stumbling-block to the least of the little ones. It will not hide meanness or hardness of heart behind a parade of economic principles. Rather it will so passionately strive for the welfare of each that the whole body of a Christian country may be uplifted by each act of love.

It may be that this higher corporateness has been but faintly descried in the efforts which we have made to mitigate the sorrows of the war. That I would not deny. But I do think that, whether consciously or not, we have made some progress in the direction of a deeper and worthier appreciation of the bonds which hold us together in mutual responsibility. The future social state will be as horrified at some

of our crude ideas of charity, our workhouses, our system of parish relief, our distribution of charitable funds, our failure to forecast unemployment, as we are horrified at general mendicancy, the system of relieving poverty of a century ago. And it will find, I think, that in the black cloud which fell on the earlier years of the twentieth century there were some gleams of light.

CHAPTER II

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF CAPITAL

MOST of us, a couple of months ago, would have given a definition of capital, if we had been asked for it, from one of the textbooks, or possibly would have ventured a combination of various definitions. But the central idea in our minds would have been exceedingly simple. We should have thought that on the one hand there was the possession of property which summed up the idea of capital and on the other hand there was labour. During recent years the antithesis between the two has been sharply marked. It has been evidenced in trade disputes, some of them exceedingly angry, where capital has declared on the one hand that it could not afford to pay labour a higher remuneration, having regard to its own interests, and on the other hand labour urged that its remuneration was insufficient. This is placing the simple issue before us as between capital and labour. It is certainly not technical, nor is it inclusive, but it serves for our purpose of studying the rapid developments of our time.

We soon learned that this simple but current

idea of the relationship between capital and labour was by no means sufficient. Within the space of a few days the whole complex tangle of the credit system was revealed to us. The Stock Exchange as the centre of interchange of documents representing capital found not only that it could not proceed with its work, but that so intimate were the complications of bank advances and the like that its difficulties could not be revealed even in the sense of the narrow revelation necessary to put matters on a sound footing. We heard of American millionaires owning vast amounts of "capital" being suddenly unable to raise the price of a dinner, in spite of the possession of paper certificates. Then came the moratorium, which was a State enactment having moral as well as financial significance. Then came the event which was even more significant, the act of the Government in guaranteeing the Bank of England in the acceptance of bills and in providing differences in marine insurance. Before a month had passed we had Mr. Lloyd George's striking statement to the municipal representatives to the effect that in order to prevent competition in raising capital it would be well if the Government became the central borrowing agency and loaned to municipalities the money they required for works started to relieve distress. The condition which the Chancellor laid down is of the utmost importance: "We do not want to find any money

for you unless there is really actual insistent distress in your districts. It is very much better that you should get the people to work in things that are normal if you can." Afterwards we had the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce thanking the Government for the arrangement for making monetary advances to traders in order that overseas commerce might be resuscitated. This use of the concentrated capital of the country is a development which marks a definite stage in economic history.

Looking back a few years we have always discussed the question of Government interference from the point of view of Government control. It has always been in the background of the discussion that private enterprises would fulfil all the necessary functions, but that Government might check and restrain, and indeed that the checks and restraints should be kept within narrow limits. But here we see tendencies towards an altogether different function. It is curious that it should be in respect of banking that the tendency is most definite. We have read much during recent years on the nationalization of the "means of industry," but there has been curiously little consideration of the relationship of banking to the State. In England we have been satisfied with the position of the Bank of England, and only a few critics of the highly expert order have noticed a change coming. In the United States

the discussion has been rather more enlightened, as any one may see from an examination of the American Economic Quarterlies for last year. Meantime in England the joint-stock banks have grown to a colossal size and their functions have become of so much importance that the tangle of credit to which I have referred is due very considerably to their development and to their enterprise.

But when we came to war with another industrial country, and a keen rival in industry and in commerce, it became manifest that there was something wrong with the joint-stock banking system as it affected national exigencies. We had these banks at the heart and soul of trading and of commerce, but they had their own interests to protect and their own stockholders to consider. So it came about that when the Government came to the aid of the financial system of the country through the agency of these banks the situation was misunderstood by several of them, and they used, or seemed to use, the Government guarantee to build up their own security—a very valuable asset for future trade, true enough—instead of coming forward with greater boldness to finance trade and to restore foreign exchange and thus to bring trade as far as possible to the normal. There has been some ground for the suspicion that some joint-stock banks have used the moratorium a little harshly and that depositors

have found their credit balances "ruled off." Fortunately the full effect of this was not seen inasmuch as the depositor did his business on the new account, after the "ruling off," and continued to use the old balance, but this was by favour of the bank and could be stopped in a moment under the moratorium.

Now all this has had its subtle influence. It has set people asking questions. There has been a considerable amount of enlightenment on the subject of gold currency, paper-money, buying stocks on account, and other similar subjects. But the most valuable enlightenment of all was in respect of the relation of trade and commerce to the concentrated capital of the State. And the consequence is that there has been a decided development in the direction of claiming that the Government should directly finance trade and commerce, and not indirectly through the agency of institutions which may arrest the supply of capital at any moment. There is nothing startling in this. It is not Socialism. If there is a public trustee who deals with investments on behalf of deceased members of the community, could there not also be a public trustee ready to advance, on reasonable interest, the capital required for approved industry, or at any rate a certain proportion of that capital? The idea has been more widely accepted than some of us realize. It may have enormous influence upon trade and upon the relation

between capital and labour. It may help to remove one of the main difficulties, which is that a capitalist holds a dual function in which his financial function is confused with his function as an employer. It may do something to remove the difficulty of joint-stock companies, the "soulless employers" of the textbooks. There is something reprehensible in the idea that shares in industrial corporations are subject to wide fluctuations and that they are the toys of speculative enterprise. We can readily imagine that if there were a common capital for the general financing of approved industries there would be an advance in the direction of the workers themselves providing the marginal capital and a distinct benefit to the community in the modification of the present rather speculative method of handling the capital which is the very life-blood of labour. State-owned capital could hardly be usurious, and if used in conjunction with private enterprise as regards the particular industries it might bring a welcome solution of the Socialism *versus* Individualism question.

Now this is not at all a new idea. All that is claimed for it in this place is that it is a scheme which has been forced into the foreground by the financial difficulties of recent months. That those difficulties were so grave as to call for heroic measures does not minimize the importance of the incident. They differed not in kind

but in degree only from the financial difficulties which always are with us though they appear more clearly at times of crisis. The economists have not faced financial crises with the patient skill which they have devoted to more stable conditions, but it has become increasingly evident of late years that there are means by which the influence of these crises can be mitigated, and they are shrewdly examined in the August number of the *Quarterly Journal of Economics.* All that is contended at this moment is that a national fund of capital can legitimately be used for the furtherance of trade, and that the use of it in this way has opened a vista in social reconstruction. It is interesting to notice that the Swiss National Bank has adopted a scheme which will have a further tendency in the same direction, since it will enable the Federal Government to make advances in the form of Treasury notes, which will be legal tender, on mortgage of buildings and of raw material. This step, brought about by the war, is one of the farthest developments of the idea of the State financing of industry. And it is worthy of notice that the English Consul-General for Duesseldorf, in 1913, drew attention to the fact that the financing of industries by banks and private capitalists in Germany had come near a crisis owing to the fact that the banks were afraid to lend money to industries with sufficient freedom since the

Balkan War, and the State was unable to come to their aid. Thus we can see the tendency in a twofold form. In both countries the danger of the financing of industries and of commerce by means of private institutions has brought with it the demand for government action. But to do this the Government must be very stable. It must itself attract the confidence of the investor. Otherwise there is no remedy, but merely a transference of danger.

In order that this necessary stability may be ensured the menace of war must be removed. We now see a little more clearly how this menace has overshadowed the relation between Capital and Labour during the past ten years. It has brought a constant state of unsettlement, and the periodical threats of international rupture have compelled the capitalist to safeguard his position whereby the worker has suffered. The Prussian menace must be removed, not only in the interests of political freedom, but in the interests of economic righteousness.

CHAPTER III

THE REORGANIZATION OF LABOUR

IT seems almost incredible that a couple of years ago there was an organization of labour in process which promised to become world-wide. It was to be offensive to the rest of the social state. It took the form of modified syndicalism in this country, and we were told that it was to become international. Hints by no means vague were given to us that before very long there might be a universal conflict, an armageddon, not between the races and nations, but between the workers and the possessing classes. Those who relied upon the international friendship of labour organizations had a rude awakening. The spirit of nationalism proved to be far stronger than the spirit of socialism. All the assurances which had been given to us in the past few years to the effect that the working peoples would prevent war have proved to be fallacious. They have not prevented war. They have not resisted kings. The international socialists are ranged against each other as angrily as the international individualists. The *Vorwaerts*

is allowed in German barracks, but it is a mild-mannered *Vorwaerts*. Socialism has not influenced militarism, but militarism has throttled socialism.

Both in Germany and in England the leaders of the labour cause have lost more influence during the past couple of months than they will be able to regain in as many decades. Those of us who had attempted to plead in different places for a generous regard for the various phases of the labour movement in England cannot but be bitterly disappointed. There is all the difference in the world between the attitude of the labour journals of the United States to the war and the attitude of some British labour leaders. It is sad to see hair-splitting over the diplomatic process, side by side with a suggestion that "secret" diplomacy is never in the interest of the people. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald disappointed some of his warmest admirers when he blew so hot and cold, and hinted that England should be neutral—selfishly neutral—in the conflict. Was it for this that the labour movement had burned so fiercely?

And when we find, at a time when the country is throbbing with the spirit of self-sacrifice, that there are leaders of the workers so out of touch with the national spirit that they are suggesting that the war is none of their affair, we can only look on with stupefied amazement. What has happened so to warp their judgement? How is

it they have failed to understand what the progressive forces in Italy have so clearly realized? These soon let the Italian Government know that if their country took sides with Austria and Germany there would be social revolution. They knew what militarism and armaments and Krupp mean to their brethren in Germany. They knew that there can be no social advance until this passion for armaments is throttled. They knew that among the fiercest of the leaders in France were men who were most vigorous in the fight for social rights. They knew what it meant to every worker in Belgium to be threatened with Kaiserism. It was gratifying to find Mr. Arthur Henderson, perhaps a little late in the day, pointing the lesson of the neutrality of Belgium, and urging that we should fight lest "our own country should come under the domination of an unscrupulous military power, whose necessity knows no law." Even so, it cannot be admitted that Mr. Henderson sees quite as clearly as his French and Belgian brethren that the very cause of the progress of labour is at stake.

I have dealt with a number of social tendencies which have been evident during the present war, but I think that the most significant tendency of all is that the workers seem to have lost touch with some of their leaders. It is not a new tendency. A couple of years ago we noticed that there

was a lack of sympathy between leaders and men. We saw several strikes begun by the men without the consent of their leaders. Some of us felt that this lack of discipline was to be regretted, but it seems now, looking a little closer into the facts, that the men had discovered instinctively that their leaders were lacking in imagination. They had become narrowed in their judgement. They had become overborne by the oppression of the detailed administration of the labour organizations. They who used their bitterest language for the bureaucrat had themselves become bureaucrats. So they have not realized on this occasion that what is at stake is the progress of labour itself. So angry are they with "militarism" that they have failed to comprehend that the worst militarism of all is striving to put the neck of Europe under its feet. They have forgotten what Bebel said of German militarism.

It is almost a tragedy that the labour leaders alone should be indifferent to the meaning of this struggle. They might have learned much from the social changes which the horrors of war have necessitated. They might have pointed out to us the gaps in our social organization. Here, for example, is a homely instance. On the evening that this page was written English grapes were selling in the Tottenham Court Road for ninepence a pound, and in Piccadilly for four shillings

and sixpence—the same quality of grapes. It is important to realize that the official prices of foodstuffs have had a serious influence in checking disparities of prices, but even so there have been instances where our social system, as revealed at a time of strain, has proved to be inefficient, if only men of reasonably sympathetic insight had been there to point out the fact. But they lost the opportunity. They boasted of their coldness and indifference, and the international labour movement will go on in spite of them. Men who have fought shoulder by shoulder for a common cause are more likely to evolve a fraternity than any number of international conferences, and German militarism called for something more definitely destructive than resolutions. And, paradox though it may seem to be, the men who oppose each other will find a deeper and closer bond of union in God's good time when the real cause of the conflict is powerful no more to set them at each other's throats.

Meantime, while the leadership of organized labour in England has not done itself justice, other tendencies have been manifested. A couple of years ago it seemed as if labour and capital were in irreconcilable hostility. So, I think, they are until we can do something to resolve the antithesis. But this resolution is already in process. The national conscience was not at all easy at the fact that soldiers' and sailors' dependents suffer

most for their country. Mr. Bonar Law gave utterance to what was a very general apprehension on this point. Even of more moment was the revolt against the treatment of these servants of the State by "charitable" means. "The sums due to the wives of soldiers and sailors are wages, and any arrangement which involves their payment by means of voluntary relief machinery is to be strongly condemned. The money is State money, paid in discharge of State obligations, and should be paid by State servants, and should reach the recipients through no other channels, no matter how excellent and efficient those channels are." That is from a popular daily paper, and it is worthy of special notice. It is not a logical leap to translate it into terms of ordinary labour, and we shall realize to what an extent we have progressed in our conceptions. Apart from this apparently philosophical consideration—though I think it is much more than mere philosophy—there is the fact that so many employers and employing corporations have provided for the retention of positions for those of their staffs who are absent at the war, and for their payment in part during such absence. This is done under stress of deep national feeling. But it is indicative of what might be done, if only sympathetic feeling is fostered. And one other fact deserves mention, and that is that so readily an arrangement has been made between

employers and employed to reduce wages all round rather than dismiss members of the staff at the time of strain.

I am not urging that all this means a labour millenium. I am urging that the change in the conception of capital and the change in the relation, at a time of deep national feeling, between employer and employed, together with the curious stand-aside position which has been taken up by the leaders of the organizations, must have its influence on the labour movement of the future. It would be folly to attempt to conjecture in what direction that influence will operate in England, but I should not be surprised if we saw a development in the direction of co-operation and of nationalized financing which would give the workers more intelligent interest in the control and in the prosperity of their particular industry. We are on the eve, I think, of some kind of Gild movement which will be the beginnings of a Social State of which the present war was the birth-pang.

It is an important matter, too, that the question of child labour should have been forced into the front. Child labour is one of the gravest blots on our industrial system. Miss Bridges Adams has suggested that the Government should "extend to the Department of Education the generous expenditure and magnificent organizing ability now being shown in the departments

of war" with a view to the restriction of child labour, and also to carry out the constructive demands in respect of education laid down by the Trade Union Congress. There are difficulties in the way, especially when we remember that the wages of working children are more necessary to the families from which they come at a time when the work of father—and, alas, of mother—is restricted. But it is worthy of notice that the evil has been more vividly revealed to us while we are at war, and that there are those amongst us who are eager to learn the lessons.

We are seeing, in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's burning words, "a new patriotism, richer, nobler, more exalting than the old; a new recognition amongst all classes, high and low, shedding themselves of selfishness—a new recognition that the honour of a country does not depend merely upon the maintenance of its glory in the stricken field, but in protecting its homes from distress as well." We might add that this new patriotism will result in a reorganization of labour not perhaps quite as the doctrinaires have expected, but wills the intent that the spirit of mutual trust shall be the basis of industrial relationship and that the worker shall become the active partner of the new captain of industry.

CHAPTER IV

THE REFORMATION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

JUST as we have had many revelations of the deeper tendencies which have been manifested during the war towards social reconstruction, so we have had indications of a coming international reconstruction. Archdeacon Lilley has made an eloquent reference to the future League of Nations, and it is an inspiring vision. Certainly it is clear, so far as the war has gone, that the relationship between England and France and Belgium must leave a lasting mark on the future of Western Europe. And the new *entente* will not be the mere friendliness of high diplomacy : it will be the friendliness of peoples. If one feels a little anxious as to the attitude of some of the labour leaders in England, it is because there is reason to fear lest their imagination should have failed to comprehend the ultimate value of this friendliness of peoples. It is an odd irony that from this quarter should come the evidence of the isolated insularity which previously would seem to have characterized one

phase of English religious life. When the Catholicism of France—and, in a smaller degree, of Belgium—has begun to awaken to its social duties and its social responsibilities, when we find in the French literature of the day a readiness to look upon the Christian religion as the vital force which will yet sweeten and strengthen human relationships, it is surely the moment for us to broaden our sympathies and to attempt to discover if, under newer and more favourable conditions, there will not be the most glorious opportunity in history for a democratic Catholicism to sweep brotherly love and mutual aid into its revived life. Those who look for omens may possibly have noticed that while the election of Pope Benedict was in process there were socialistic meetings in Rome which, while urging neutrality on the Government, were also urging their kinship in the spirit with the peoples of France and Belgium, and were not forgetting our own island race. It is no longer true, as the late Pope admitted pathetically, that the Pontiff can prevent war by raising his finger, but it may be true in the generations to come that a revivified Christianity, crossing the barriers of race and nation, will be able to prevent both war and what is possibly a greater evil, the year by year drain on armaments.

Turning to the East one must admit that there has been a certain coldness in England towards

Russia. There are manifest reasons why the Gladstonian enthusiasm for Russia should be less evident in our day, in the circles which sympathize both with Mr. Gladstone's political and with his religious opinions. Yet there are reasons for eager hope in this direction also. The English Churchman will put in the foreground his passionate desire that the Eastern and Anglican Churches should learn so much more of each other as to comprehend more clearly their community of interest and of aspiration. The Englishman who realizes the history of freedom in his own country and in the West generally will feel such a confidence in the inevitability of freedom that the contact with the East will inspire him with hope, not for the East merely, but also for the West. And there is another side to it. Are we quite sure that our conceptions of State organization do not need the contribution of Russia? Are we quite sure that we know sufficient of "the soul of Russia"? The civilization which comes from the militarism of Berlin has tyrannies which are hardly more tolerable than the tyrannies in Russia of which we have read, and our own social progress is not quite so free from reproach as to enable us to scorn the social progress of Russia. It is certain that the international relationship will mean a more free interchange of thought, and if Russia will benefit from contact with some of the English political institutions

it is quite possible that the English nation and the English Church will benefit more from contact with the profoundly spiritual religious life of Russian orthodoxy than from contact with the intellectualism of Berlin.

It is surprising how little we have found in English newspapers of the deep movement which has affected the United States since the beginning of the war. Any one who has personal relationships on any considerable scale in the cities of America will know, which is more than the newspapers have told him, that the instinct of our brethren has led them right. It is true, no doubt, that statements of the English attitude to Germany have been made from a German point of view, but even in the earlier stages of the war so reputable a weekly as the New York *Nation* stated the British case admirably. Already there are signs that the interest of our American friends in the rapid changes which are being seen in Europe have been deepened and quickened. In the economic situation they have realized that no longer can it be said that there is an old and a new hemisphere. The world is more intimately bound together than it was. No longer can the restrictions which come from the Monroe Doctrine narrow and confine the interests of the United States. The labour organs have indicated their sympathy with movements in Europe which so far have been strangled by the Prussian

autocracy. Across the border there have been interchanges of sympathy with Canada which must augment the future influence of the English-speaking peoples.

As regards Germany, I am not of those who are hopeful that the war means the passing of old enmities. Some among us believe that the best side of German socialism will soon be articulate. I am afraid that for many years there will remain an acute separation between the English and the German peoples. The Germans have had for forty years the dominant idea that they were an invincible military nation. Last year at the time of the jubilee of the Kaiser, when Berlin was celebrating twenty-five years' peace, there were parents in dozens who brought their children to see the Bismarck Denkmal and the statues in the Siegesallee. If that was their attitude to a forty-year old victory, we can conjecture their attitude to a shattering event which, whatever it be, will not be a victory. We have been asked to draw a distinction between England's enmity to Kaiserism and the quarrel between the peoples. The distinction must be drawn, but I fear we run a risk of danger if we build too much upon it. Such protest against Kaiserism as is made by Prussian socialism is a puny thing, and be it said that Prussian socialism has but few points of common interest with that social advance for which so much of the Christian

spirit in England is yearning. It is a cold and materialistic socialism. It has less of the spirit of humanity than the socialism of France. It will need changing in its very heart before it can take its part in the general progress of the peoples of the new League of the Nations.

It may be, and some there are who think so, that we shall see a revival of the identity in one form or another of the states other than Prussia, and that the crude materialism and unspiritual efficiency of Berlin will take a less prominent place in the national life. Certainly we shall do well not to forget that Prussianism and Prussian religion, after all, do not express the whole religious life of the federated states. But, making every allowance for this, I fear that the improvement in international relations, the greater intimacy which will result from the sense of gratitude, the quickening of social fervour, of which there are signs already, will leave the heart of Europe untouched for a generation, even if economic influences should press more heavily upon Prussian Germany than seems to be likely at present. We must be patient. The other European states must so conduct themselves to each other and the different sections of industrial life must so bind themselves together as to show to all men that the world has come through the discipline of sorrow with high hopes and with the fervent intention to realize them.

CHAPTER V

THE REHABILITATION OF CHRISTIAN ECONOMICS

SO it comes about that in the hour of trial just as the spirit of religion has manifested itself in the nation, so the spirit of Christian Economics shows signs of eventual triumph. It has been said again and again that Christian Economics knows nothing of particular theories. It is merely the emphasis on the accompaniment of responsibilities with privileges. But one hardly likes to believe that the content of positive Christianity, as regards the relation between man and man, ends with the enunciation of moral responsibility. It is disquieting to look back over the ages and to see capital so variously regarded as to render the Christian attitude to usury somewhat indefinite, and to see the moral side of labour so misunderstood as to make slavery possible.

It cannot be disputed that the dark period through which the nations are passing has already influenced their conceptions of positive Christian teaching on human relationship. It

is above all manifest that those nations which are fighting together in what is beyond question a Christian crusade have already realized that there must be something of the nature of definite social reconstruction which will have its bearing on the international relationship between the peoples. The fervent endeavour towards righteousness and freedom which is at the base of the Allies' struggle has already reacted on their internal life. Just as we have seen that our own social conceptions in England have been changed, so we can see that it is significant that the French socialists should find themselves fighting with forces against which, controversially, they have been ranged, and it is not without result, even of more import to the progress of the world, that Russia should so rapidly have learned from the Western nations with whom she has placed herself in the historic combat. Similarly, as we have seen, there has been a wakening of moral fervour for international righteousness in the distant United States, and that must wield an enormous influence in the ages to come.

To estimate and to appreciate these movements is not to fall back on the lethargy of the optimist. We need to be active and alert if we are to consecrate into actuality the tendencies of which we have seen the unmistakable evidence. If charity is changing its characteristics and looking

for economic enlightenment in order that it may be more efficient, not only in giving temporary relief, but in building up the future social state; if capital is becoming in some sense, or tending to become, the stored concentrated wealth of the State available for use in advancing the general welfare; if labour is becoming the co-operative industry which merits not the remuneration of hire merely, but the frank recognition of dignity and worth; if there are signs in plenty that the Catholic Christian spirit cannot tolerate Napoleonism or Supermanism, and that at the cost of bitter tears and sacrifice it must impel the peoples to a great endeavour to cleanse and purify the civilized world—then the individual Christian is face to face with a wonderful opportunity. Political party shibboleths become a hollow mockery; questions affecting the rights of property assume a new shape; the worth of human life becomes greater and the preciousness of the true freedom, wherein at great price we have been made free, is evidenced before all men.

Then, surely, is the time for the Christian so to reassort his ideas that he is ready for the time when these deep-lying movements will focus themselves so that the Catholic Church will take the definite lead in social reconstruction. The preparation of the individual will consist not in the study of the science of Economics, for much

which has been said on the subject of economic theory will require restatement, nor in the adoption of any particular doctrine as regards the structure of the social state. It will rather consist in a sympathetic attitude of mind. The Christian will believe of economic tendencies, as of all other tendencies, that they are overruled, that there is a God in heaven Whose instruments they are. He will not be afraid of labels. The word "Socialism" will not affright him; indeed he will dispute the very notion that all economic thought must range itself on one or other side of the dichotomy which marks Socialism from Individualism. He will look at the events of the day with as much of insight as he can cultivate. He will see the stern individualism of the United States conducting the business of a State canal, and deliberating whether or not the State shall possess a mercantile marine. Even then he will not be incited to cry "Socialism." Rather, he will quietly and calmly consider in what way this and a hundred similar movements will affect the social state of the future.

Nor can he forget the significance of the individual soul in thus conducting his quiet reflection. It is at this point that Christian Economics must utter its word of warning. The very war in which we are engaged is a protest on behalf of the individual soul. It is clear from a study of

the later developments of German philosophy that the individual soul and the individual body are of small account. Treitschke's lectures included no word of hesitation on this point. The superman who was to triumph was rather a machine, an aggregate, than a man. This is in violent opposition to that most precious doctrine of the Christian Faith which is proudest in its humblest moment that "the Word became Flesh and dwelt among us." When the Lord, the King, put on glorious apparel, it was the apparel of our human frame. The great mystery of the Incarnation includes this simple thesis, that there is nothing in the world of sense so high and holy as the human body, and in the progress of man nothing so precious as the progress of the soul.

But this note of warning should not deafen our ears to the yearning for social progress. It should not prevent us from attempting to unite the possibilities of spiritual development with the actualities of social reconstruction. A nation which has been welded by sorrow must be the more sensitive to social wrongs, or the welding is imperfect. A stricken and wounded race, after its holy crusade, cannot be contented with a submerged tenth. A united empire cannot look with equanimity upon fissures which mar industrial enterprise with a constant conflict between property and labour. A people whose blood has made infinitely dear the land of France and the

plains of Flanders cannot look at the steadfast stars without determining that the shedding of blood and of tears in its industrial progress must be confined to narrower limits than heretofore. A manhood and womanhood which has interceded day by day at the altar for its kith and kin serving God and man on the battlefield cannot but come from its prayers to the anxious consideration of the wellbeing of the body corporate, the wellbeing of manhood and womanhood whose sacrifice is none the less real because the battlefield is less evidently before our anxious eyes.

So we apply Christian Economics to our problems. The theologian has his own considerations which must be mentioned. He looks on a severed Christianity which has thus hidden its differences in the conflict against the tyrannous exaggeration of human might. He looks hopefully to the East for a contribution to the sum total of the Catholic deposit which will bring it nearer to the complete whole, as it was before the great schism. The economist, too, has his hopes. He looks on the history of a divided Christianity with shrinking fear. He trembles at the thought that may be those divisions have checked the influence of Christianity upon social progress. And then he turns to the present, and he looks below the surface. What if it means that all this agonized suffering, all the anxiety and sorrow, all the shedding of blood and the severance of

human ties, are the process by which the Christian religion shall at length assert itself as the leader in social progress, and the inspirer of social aims! It has been the dream of countless individual Christians, from Savonarola to Tolstoi, and alas, it has happened that so often they have found their social zeal chilled within the Catholic fold. Hence it arises that to each of us there is a solemn duty at this moment of transition. It is the duty of patience, of open-mindedness, of open-heartedness, of hope—and of quiet confidence. We are sharers in a wonderful work at a wonderful moment in history. It is as if the valuation of time had been entirely demolished, and the slow process of the centuries was coming to rich fruition in fewer days than it took years to mature. And ideas which to us seemed permanently true are shown to be foolish; theories which seemed to us to be established are lying in fragments at our feet. Yet amid all the ruins there is one truth established. The one welding of the nations is still ours. The one spirit of unity still inspires us to the upward aim. So far as we can establish our economic relationships as fundamentally Christian, the whole rapid process of the past few months seems to tend to that establishment.

Printed by A. R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd.
London and Oxford